

AREA PLAN COMMISSION OF TIPPECANOE COUNTY
CITIZEN PARTICIPATION COMMITTEE
MINUTES

DATE..... July 22, 2003
TIME..... 2:00 PM
PLACE..... Grand Prairie Room
Tippecanoe County Office Building

ATTENDEES

NAME

ORGANIZATION

Geneva Werner
Steve Clevenger
Larry Rose
Beth Havek

Vinton Neighborhood Association
Citizen
Wabash Valley Trust
J&C

STAFF

Margy Deverall
Doug Poad
Brian Weber

Assistant Director
Senior Planner - Transportation
Transportation Planner

I. APPROVAL OF THE MAY MEETING MINUTES

Minutes were approved as mailed.

II. FEEDBACK & DISCUSSION FROM GROUP REPRESENTATIVES

Brian Weber stated that the projects to be in the Transportation Improvement Program and discussion of a new traffic signal were the two topics presented at the May meeting.

Steve Clevenger commented that everyone he has spoken with did not want a new traffic light on US 52. **Doug Poad** added that the consultant presented their proposal to the Technical Transportation Committee last week. The Committee conceptually approved the consultants' recommendations including a new signal on US 52.

Larry Rose asked where the signal would be. **Doug** replied that it would be between SR 38 and US 52 across the Ford dealership. The proposal recommended by the Consultant was then reviewed. **Larry** commented that that location on US 52 is a mess and another big box store is not what this Community needs. He further added that we do not need another traffic light and that the current ones are not coordinated.

Doug stated that Caterpillar is also proposing to sell some property and then develop it commercially with a big box store. **Larry** stated that big box stores have a life expectancy of seven years. If you could eliminate the traffic lights and only allow right hand turns with left turning roundabouts in the medians it would save a lot of time.

Geneva Werner stated that the comments passed along to her were more negative regarding a new traffic light. She also heard negative comments regarding the new shopping center with all of the empty buildings that are available. More discussion occurred regarding the old Target Store.

Larry stated that the irony of this whole discussion is that Kossuth was stopped when it should have kept going. It's ridiculous how things are operating and that it would be better off not to have any planning at all. If we are going to have planning, let's have a plan. **Doug** stated that original Thoroughfare Plan showed Kossuth Street extending eastward. It no longer became a viable connection when Caterpillar developed.

Geneva asked if the property that Caterpillar wants to sell is on the corner of SR 26. **Doug** stated that is was.

Larry asked what is the current occupancy and vacancy rate for shopping centers. **Doug** replied that we do not have that information. **Larry** added that those rates are important to understand before allowing more shopping centers to be developed. Discussion followed regarding the process and approval of new shopping centers and business districts.

Larry added that this community needs a moratorium on new traffic signals. We have too many now and it's difficult to get anywhere

Geneva stated that if the City wants people downtown, they need to change the parking regulations. One or two hours are not enough. She added that many people do not use the City garage because it does not have an elevator. Discussion followed regarding this past Saturday morning.

Doug followed up the previous conversation by stating that any moratorium will have to come from either the State DOT or the City. **Larry** added that a moratorium would send a message stating that the number of traffic signals is becoming proliferous and motorist cannot get anywhere. By continual stopping and starting we are putting more emission in the air, ruining the brakes and cars. It's actually hurting the public by putting more traffic signals in. Discussion followed.

Larry asked why is there a need for a traffic light at 16th and Kossuth. They could put in a flashing light and it would still work. Discussion followed regarding the history of 18th Street and Super Wal-Mart and the signal that was not removed.

Larry wanted to complement those who converted the median strips on Sagamore Parkway south of SR 26. They need to continue it north of SR 26 and on SR 26. **Margy Deverall** added that US 52 has been an ugly corridor for a very long time.

III. PROGRAM

Doug began the first presentation by handing out a color map and draft copies of the Transportation Improvement Program or TIP. The projects in the document are shown on the map.

Doug stated that the TIP is a comprehensive short range, or five-year, implementation plan. Projects listed in the Plan come from both Cities, the County, CityBus, Purdue Airport, and INDOT. The color-coding on the map was explained.

Local projects were reviewed first. They included widening South 9th from Twyckenham to CR 350S and Brady Lane from 18th Street to US 52.

Referencing the color map, **Larry** asked if they were going to make a connection to one of the projects. **Doug** stated that the project is a pedestrian and bicycle trail. The City has built the trail from 9th to Beck and the project will extend the trail to Wabash Avenue. **Larry** asked if it would dead end at 9th Street. Referring to a different map, Doug then pointed out the east/west road corridor with Twyckenham Extension, Twyckenham, the road connection between 9th and 18th with the new railroad bridge and Brady Lane.

Larry asked if CR 350S would be straightened out just east of new US 231. **Doug** stated that there were several design issues that dictated the location of the road.

Larry asked if CR 550S would be converted to SR 25. **Doug** replied that the State DOT is looking at using CR 350S and that the City and State DOT are still negotiating the trade.

Larry stated that on a recent infrastructure tour that was sponsored by the Chamber, he had noticed that there are no standard distances between the sidewalk and curb. He added that he did not see that many street trees. He then asked if any of the proposed projects included street trees. **Doug** replied that some do and some do not. Those that do not included Brady Lane. **Doug** further stated that the City wanted to preserve the homeowners front yard and the road will be widened up to the sidewalk. **Larry** added that from the car viewpoint that it makes sense. You want to drop people off on the sidewalk and not the grass. It does not make sense if there is only a three-foot section between the road and sidewalk. Trees within that small section are maintenance problems. **Doug** followed up and mentioned the sidewalk along the proposed Tapawingo Extension. Discussion followed.

Doug then went on and explained the Farabee Drive project and what the new road will look like after completion. **Larry** stated that it is a necessary project.

Larry suggested that they should put back any trees that were cut down. **Margy** stated that the various jurisdictions are not in agreement where trees should go. She then described the requirements by the City and County. **Larry** stated that he thought that was the reason why we have an Area Plan Commission to have it standardized. **Margy** stated that the Plan Commission has the zoning ordinance and it has standards in it but the Cities have their own ordinances where they establish policies within their jurisdictions and they are not always the same. They don't necessarily have the same vision. **Margy** further added that even without a tree in that parkway strip having a space between the curb and sidewalk depending on the volume and speed of traffic that is on the road by having that separation between the car and the pedestrian give a greater sense of safety to the person who is walking. Discussion followed regarding sidewalks.

Doug stated that there is no agreement regarding bicycle amenities. Some prefer bicycle lanes and others prefer side paths. He then pointed out the South River Road project, which includes wide shoulders for bicyclists. **Larry** mentioned that it is part of the scenic byway route. **Geneva** asked if the route would be marked for bicyclists. **Margy** replied that they are not marked further out. **Geneva** asked if it would be safer if they were marked? **Margy** stated that from her experience she has never seen cars in those lanes but added that it is more confusing when the shoulder is the width of a travel lane like CR 350S. Signage would be the preferred method.

Doug then pointed out on the map the US 231 Relocation project. He mentioned that the route north of SR 26 is the preferred alignment. The design includes a grassed median with bicycle and pedestrian paths on both sides. Landscaping has been discussed by the State DOT and they will not put any planting in the right-of-way due to safety concerns.

Other projects in West Lafayette were reviewed including McCormick Road, Lindberg Road and extending Cumberland.

Larry asked which road takes you to the golf course. Members stated that it is Cherry. **Larry** further asked if there would be a pedestrian path or jogging trail there. **Margy** stated that some are under construction now included the Cattail Trail. A part of it will

be on Cherry. **Larry** pointed out that he has observed about 100 pedestrians a day. **Doug** stated that the City of West Lafayette has done a great job in developing trails. **Larry** agreed. **Doug** further added that Lafayette has an extension trail design.

Larry asked if the citizen group could propose or recommend a bike trail along Cherry. **Doug** replied that the comments would be passed along to Joe Payne who is with the City.

Continuing the project review, **Doug** reviewed the Kalberer Road project, Yeager Road improvements north of Kalberer Road, the additional left turning lane for Hunter Road (which was suggested by this Committee), improvements to Stadium and Northwestern, improvements to SR 26 and Klondike, CR 200N, and CR 500W. **Doug** then mentioned that APC has the design plans for the CR 500W and Klondike improvements and INDOT is advertising for a public input. **Margy** asked what would they be doing at CR 500W. **Doug** replied that they would be reducing the site distance problems.

To the eastern part of the County, the State DOT plans to resurface a portion of I-65 and make repairs to the Wabash River Bridge. Improvements are proposed at the SR 43 Interchange. **Doug** then pointed out the improvements proposed to 43 north of the interchange including widening the road to four and five lanes, sight distance improvements and a new bridge over the creek.

Larry stated that SR 43 is a dangerous road and needs to be widened to four lanes.

Referring to the map, there are a number of projects related to and near the new State Park. They include extending the Wabash Heritage Trail; construct an eco-tone system and Eagle Wing Center in the Museums at Prophetstown; improvements to a creek crossing on SR 25; and improvements to the Hog Point Bridge.

Doug stated that the major line shown in the northeastern part of the County is the preferred Hoosier Heartland route. **Larry** asked how does the State get SR 25 through town. **Doug** replied that SR 25 now goes down the Interstate because the portion that was between US 52 and the Interstate was relinquished when the first phase of US 231 was opened. The full routing of SR 25 was then explained. **Larry** stated that it would be easier to come down Sagamore. **Steve** added that motorist would then be going through all of those stop lights.

Larry stated that he is on a committee and they are trying to figure out what are the gateways to the City. The Committee thought that SR 25 was one because the signs along the Interstate tell you to get off at SR 25. But after motorist get off there are no sign telling motorists where to go. **Doug** followed up that the long-range plan shows US 231 extending to I-65. **Larry** asked where would the interchange be located. **Doug** pointed to the spot on the map. **Geneva** asked what road would it tie into. **Doug** responded that it is US 52.

Larry suggested that an interchange be put in at Union Street and I-65. Motorists could take Union Street directly to Purdue University. Continuing, he stated that it's hard to get to Purdue. Motorists are directed not to take SR 26 but take SR 25. **Doug** replied that he would take SR 38 and CR 350S. **Larry** agreed that that would be a good way, but motorist are taking SR 26. He added that I-65 and SR 26 needs to be six lanes. **Doug** stated that INDOT has proposed those improvements. Discussion followed.

Larry stated that improvements to SR 26 from I-65 to US 52 are not on the list. **Doug** replied that the widening proposal is in the long-range plan. **Larry** stated that the widening is not needed. What needs to be done is to take away the traffic signals and install roundabouts. **Doug** followed up by reviewing the SR 26 and SR 38 corridor study. **Larry** stated that the signal timing is not working now with the post office having

priority. Discussion followed regarding the traffic signals and timing. Several Committee members restated that they do not think the traffic signals are synchronized. **Doug** stated that the best way for members to tell State Dot officials is to attend the annual district meeting that was coming up. **Doug** passed along the date and times of the meetings.

Geneva asked if the consultants ever come back and give their findings before the project is final. **Doug** replied that they do and gave the example of the public meeting held for the Tapawingo project. Additional details were given regarding public hearings that are held.

Doug then reviewed the projects on SR 26 east of the Interstate: CR 550E and McCarty Lane Extension.

Larry stated that motorists would probably not use McCarty Lane as a by-pass. He added that they would probably use the road next to Wal-Mart and if that road could have been connected to McCarty, the County could have saved a lot of money. **Doug** stated that the road is Park East Boulevard and the road is proposed not only to extend to McCarty but also to SR 38 and US 52. The road will be built by developers and not the City or County.

Larry asked if exit ramps could be built at the McCarty Lane Bridge. **Doug** followed up that this proposal was looked at during the last two long-range plan updates. The Federal Highway Administration would not allow it because the distance between McCarty and SR 26 is less than the minimum distance allowed between interchanges. Discussion followed regarding interchange problems, widening of the Interstate, future-housing growth east of the Interstate, and that Lafayette area will be one of the future economic engines.

Doug commented that projects take a long time to develop and gave US 231 as an example. He added that we are pleased with its use. **Larry** agreed but added that a grass median would have been better. **Doug** added that a grass median is proposed for 231 north of SR 26. Additional details regarding the 231 projects were presented.

Larry asked what would be the major gateways to the Campus. **Doug** replied that from the south it would be 231. From 231 they could enter from South Intramural Drive. From the west it would be SR 26. **Larry** asked if State Road 43 would continue to be one. **Doug** replied that it probably will be but there will be no major improvements because it will probably be a scenic by-way.

Larry asked if SR 43 could be connected to US 52. **Doug** replied that there probably would not be any projects to directly connect the two. **Larry** added that there is no direct connection to Campus from SR 43. **Doug** explained that INDOT would not do any major improvements due to the relinquishment agreement. **Larry** asked if it would be easy to have an access point to US 52. **Steve** added that Soldiers Home Road connects to US 52. **Margy** stated that since it will be a scenic by-way you might not want to encourage more traffic on SR 43. Discussion continued regarding major gateways into Campus and the proposals in Purdue's transportation campus plan.

Doug then went back to the TIP and stated that the document contains a large amount of information including project costs, termini, dates, discussion of federal funding, CityBus and their projects, major improvement summary, and the public participation process.

Larry asked if State Street becomes a part of the Purdue Campus, how would that effect hilltop to hilltop traffic. He also asked if State Street dead-end at the Campus edge. **Doug** replied by describing all of the proposed changes. Discussion followed.

Steve stated that the map shows the McCormick project incorrectly. He also pointed out that two labels are reversed.

Doug stated that he has sent the draft for review to INDOT, FHWA and FTA and there has been no response back.

Margy asked when was the dead line. **Doug** stated that it is usually July 1st, but since there is extensive public input, it usually gets done in August. He then pointed out in the appendix all of the comments that have been received.

Larry stated that US 52 south of Lafayette would be utilized more if the speed limit were increased. **Doug** followed up that he has found it faster to travel on US 52 rather than I-65. **Margy** stated that she takes US 52 because it is slower and fewer vehicles. **Doug** added that there is a Dairy Queen in Thorntown.

Geneva asked when do they determine when to put a left hand turn signal in. On SR 25, at the Interstate, there is a traffic signal but no left hand turn signal to access the on ramp. She witnessed a near miss because there was no chance for the person to get across. **Doug** stated that the State DOT has criteria and they will first do traffic and turning movement counts but the district office would look at it. **Geneva** asked if it was on the Hot Spot list. **Doug** replied that he did not think so.

Larry complemented the staff.

Brian then turned the members attention over to his presentation regarding a three years accident history on US 52 between SR 38 and Teal Road. Handouts were passed around.

Brian pointed out on a large aerial the location of accidents. **Margy** asked if Brian could point out the location of the proposed development. She added that she is surprised at the number of people who still do not understand the dual left turning lanes. **Doug** added that it works well when it's striped but the marks do fade. **Doug** pointed out the area and the proposed location of the new traffic light.

Brain then reviewed the packet of material pointing out the location map, staff summary, tables and figures.

Geneva asked if any of the accidents were weather related. **Brian** replied that there is a table reporting those statistics.

Larry asked if the spikes in accidents is due to additional traffic at that time. **Doug** replied that during the summer months traffic is typically less than the fall months.

Larry asked if the numbers could be related to the amount of traffic on the roads. **Doug** replied that Sunday is typically the lightest while Friday is the heaviest. **Larry** followed up adding that it does not make any sense by not including traffic volumes. **Brian** stated that we look at crashes by million entering vehicles. Additional details and traffic volumes were given.

Larry asked if SR 25 were removed, would that remove some of the traffic. **Doug** stated that people travel by the shortest path of time thus most of the traffic would stay on Teal. The only motorist that would switch routes are those unfamiliar with the area and passing through.

Brian pointed out that most of the crashes occur in broad daylight, in clear weather and on dry pavement. **Doug** summed it up stating that accidents are mostly drivers' error.

Margy stated that's when drivers are driving more carelessly.

Geneva asked where do we get the information to compile these reports. **Brian** replied that the data comes from the Indiana Department of Transportation. The information comes from the actual accident report.

Geneva remarked that this is a lot of work. **Larry** added staff did a nice job.

Larry asked if APC is going to recommend against the traffic light. **Doug** replied that the consultant hired by Alcoa and the developer and the Committee gave conceptual approval for the new traffic signal. **Brian** added that they did not get the approval for an actual permit. The developer must come back when a permit is actually filed.

Margy stated that the consultant made other recommendations in addition to the traffic light. She added that the Lafayette City Engineer stated that those improvements would probably be a good thing to happen even if the site was not developed.

Geneva asked where is the consultant from. **Doug** replied Indianapolis.

Margy stated that they had an interesting program showing little cars turning, stacking and when intersections would clear. Different scenarios were shown and you could see where the problems would be. What the program did not predict was accidents.

Geneva stated that staff did a good job presenting the items.

Brian thanked everyone for coming.

The next meeting is scheduled for September 23, 2003.

Respectfully submitted,

Doug Poad
Senior Planner - Transportation